Kids Summer Reading Program Launched

Department of Education and Culture (to July 99)
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Children can learn more about the world around them this summer at their regional libraries thanks to the 1998 summer reading program Kids Connect@the library (Branchez-vous@la bibliothSque).

All nine regional libraries are taking part in this popular, yearly initiative to encourage children to read and use the Internet available at every library in Nova Scotia.

"Once again, our libraries are showing the rest of the community how it can be done by fostering a lifelong love of reading beginning with our children," said Education and Culture Minister Robbie Harrison. "The summer reading program motivates young people to read and develop Internet skills, and promotes family literacy. This confirms that our libraries continue to play an important role in education."

Every year public libraries encourage children and people to read during the summer months by offering a variety of special activities such as story times, craft activities, games and author readings. Special efforts are being made by all libraries to connect with their communities and schools so as many young people as possible are involved in the programs and activities.

An added dimension this year is a virtual exchange program. The Pictou-Antigonish and Eastern Counties Regional Libraries will link in a virtual exchange with libraries in the Northwest Territories to develop websites to share and experience each other's unique culture. The websites will showcase stories and display writing about popular characters and the way of life in their communities. The sites developed by these young people will also add unique Canadian content to the web.

At the Colchester East-Hants Regional Library, older children work with younger children as buddies to help them choose good books to read.

The Halifax Regional Library has a slightly different book buddies program where parents are encouraged to promote family literacy by recording the number of books read with young children.

In Wolfville, the library focuses on children's interests by offering tutorials and supervised time on the Internet at the new Community Access Program site.

Many regional libraries have sent information kits to schools to encourage children to visit their local library and get involved in reading during the summer. At the Western Counties Regional Library, participation sheets will be stamped every time a young person attends a program, books computer time or borrows an item. As the stamps mount up, draws for t-shirts and mouse pads will be

made at every library branch in the region.

Every young person in the two school boards covered by the South Shore Regional Library will receive information on the summer reading program.

Last year, more than 8,000 young people were involved in the summer reading program. Projections indicate even greater numbers this year. Sponsors of the program include the Nova Scotia Provincial Library, Industry Canada's Library Net, Canadian Heritage's Young Canada Works and Tattletales Books in Dartmouth. The theme for the summer reading program, as well as the production of promotional materials, are coordinated by the Nova Scotia Provincial Library and the Council on Youth Services.

NOTE: The following is intended for use by broadcast media.

The local library will be the place to be for children this summer thanks to the Kids Connect at the Library program.

All nine regional libraries in Nova Scotia are taking part in the project.

It encourages students to read and use the Internet. Some libraries are linking up with libraries in the Northwest Territories to develop websites and share their culture.

Last year over 8-thousand children signed up for the program and the numbers are expected to climb this year.

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